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Subject: Dry Beans

Field Distribution: War Board members, Extension Editors, AAA Committeemen, OD Marketing Reports Chiefs in Me., Vt., N.Y., Mich., Minn., Nebr., S.D., Wisc., Tex., Ariz., Cal., Colo., Idaho, Kans., Mont., Nev., N.M., N.D., Oregon, Utah, Wash., Wyo.

Suggested Use: Background information to assist in last-minute drive to increase dry bean acreage through press, radio, direct contact.

OUTLOOK FOR DRY BEANS

Stocks of dry beans on March 1, 1944, totaled 1,251,000 bags (uncleaned) on farms and 5,834,000 bags (cleaned) stored in commercial storage places and under War Food Administration storage contracts in or near producing areas. While commercial and WFA stocks were nearly 700,000 bags larger than on the same date last year, stocks on farms were less than half as large.

Requirements are more than six million bags in excess of prospective production and imports. The portion of requirements that was estimated in the fall of 1943 to be met from foreign sources has been reduced by three million bags. Therefore, the pressure on our production will be much greater. Furthermore, requirements for liberated areas may increase shortly.

To produce the total requirement of almost 28 million bags (uncleaned) would require about 3.5 million planted acres, (assuming a national average yield of 808 pounds uncleaned beans per acre.) Even if the present 1944 goal of three million acres is reached, the deficit would be nearly four million bags exclusive of possible additional needs for liberated areas.

The seed requirements for next year's plantings cannot be reduced. The extent to which we fail to meet our goals indicates the deficit in the edible supply. The needs for beans for seed were set without calculating seed supplies for land liberated from the Axis and placed in agricultural production. Should we move rapidly in European theaters, the seed requirements would be very heavy. It's better economy to ship the seed to allow them to produce their own food than to continue to furnish heavy supplies of food produced here.

THE PROBLEM

According to the March 1 intentions-to-plant report of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the U. S. production of dry beans will fall approximately 17 percent below the 1944 goals.

To close the gap between intentions to plant and the goal, it will be necessary to promote additional planted acreage in certain key States. Increased acreage prospects appear best in these States: Michigan, California, and Colorado.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Circular letters can be sent from County Committees to bean growers urging them to use methods that will increase yields per acre and to increase acreage planted to dry beans.

Radio appeals, press releases, personal contacts, and visual aids also can be used.

As a means of decreasing civilian requirements for beans and supplementing commercial supplies, an intensive garden and canning program, with special emphasis on green and dry beans, edible soybeans, and blackeye and other cow peas should be undertaken -- varying by areas, but emphasizing the products most adaptable.

APPEALS

They are a war food -- for our armed forces, civilians, and our Allies. U. S. military and war services alone will take approximately 19 percent of our 1943 bean production.

They are a fighting food. They come close to meat, eggs, milk, and cheese as body-builders.

Beans, being self-dehydrated, are a relatively cheap food. They transport easily, handle easily, and store well. They are easily prepared and are ideally suited to movement wherever and whenever wanted. Anticipating that some continental territory may be occupied by our forces this fall, the 1944 bean crop would become available in a most opportune time. If the crop were ample, it would go far toward relieving a tight food situation on those parts of the Continent. It would be difficult to produce too many dry beans in 1944 in the United States.

When our goals were set, we were relying on 6,000,000 bags from foreign sources. Imports of dry beans thus far have been disappointing, our estimate of the quantity of imports having decreased 50 percent since last fall. This means a loss of three million bags, or enough food for 10 million men for 90 days. This should be made up through increased domestic production!

From the farmer's standpoint, dry beans are a comparatively easy crop to grow and provide a good return without requiring too much in labor and attention. WFA will support the price of dry edible beans by purchases in carload lots, cleaned and bagged, f.o.b. cars at country shipping points, at prices for U.S. No. 1 grade beans ranging from \$6.50 to \$8 per hundred pounds, according to type.